

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 – 20 (cancelled).

21. (Currently Amended) In a messaging system that provides clients with electronic messaging services, a method for organizing one or more replies to an electronic message, comprising the steps of:

assigning a unique identifier to the electronic message; and

using the unique identifier to associate the one or more replies with the electronic message;

storing a single copy of the electronic message at a host system to be shared by a plurality of intended recipients; and

storing single copy of the one or more replies at the host system to be shared by the plurality of intended recipients such that the one or more replies and the associated electronic message may be accessed by each of the plurality of intended recipients.

22. (Original) A method as recited in claim 21, further comprising the steps of:

assigning a reply identifier to a first reply created by a recipient of the electronic message; and

using the reply identifier to associate, with the first reply, each of one or more subsequent replies created in response to the first reply.

23. (Original) A method as recited in claim 21, further comprising the step of separately presenting the electronic message and the one or more replies to a recipient.

24. (Original) A method as recited in claim 22, further comprising the step of separately presenting the electronic message, the first reply and the one or more subsequent replies to a recipient.

25. (Original) A method as recited in claim 24 wherein the step of separately presenting the electronic message, the first reply, and the one or more subsequent replies comprises the step of presenting to the recipient a tree arrangement wherein the electronic message is a trunk, the first reply is a first-level branch depending from the trunk, and the one or more subsequent replies are second-level branches depending from the first-level branch.

26. (Original) A method as recited in claim 21 wherein the method includes steps for distributing the electronic message to clients of a host system, comprising the steps of:
creating one or more distribution lists including each client of the host system who is a recipient of the electronic message;
storing at least one copy of the electronic message at the host system; and
using the one or more distribution lists to notify each client of the host system who is a recipient of the electronic message, such that the at least one copy of the electronic message is made available to each notified client.

27. (Original) A method as recited in claim 26 wherein the method includes steps for distributing replies to the electronic message, comprising the steps of:
assigning a unique list identifier to the distribution list;
storing at least one copy of a reply created in response to the electronic message;
and
notifying each client who is a recipient of the reply using the unique list identifier, such that the at least one copy of the reply is made available to each client who is a recipient of the reply.

28. (Original) A method as recited in claim 21, further comprising the steps of:
assigning a reply identifier to a first reply; and
using the reply identifier to associate, with the first reply, each of one or more subsequent replies created in response to the first reply.

Claims 29 – 34 (Cancelled).

35. (Currently Amended) A system for organizing replies to an electronic message, the system comprising:

processor means for uniquely identifying the electronic message; and

processor means for associating one or more replies with the uniquely identified electronic message;

a storage means for storing a single copy of the electronic message at a host system to be shared by a plurality of intended recipients; and

a storage means for storing single copy of the one or more replies at the host system to be shared by the plurality of intended recipients such that the one or more replies and the associated electronic message may be accessed by each of the plurality of intended recipients.

36. (Original) A system recited in claim 35 wherein a recipient of the electronic message can optionally fork a first reply, the system further comprising:

processor means for uniquely identifying the first reply; and

processor means for associating, with the first reply, each of one or more subsequent replies created in response to the first reply.

37. (Original) A system as recited in claim 35, the system further comprising means for separately presenting the electronic message and the one or more replies to a recipient.

38. (Original) A system as recited in claim 36, the system further comprising means for separately presenting to a recipient the electronic message, the first reply and the one or more subsequent replies.

39. (Original) A system as recited in claim 35 wherein the system includes a host system and means for distributing the electronic message, the system further comprising:

processor means for creating one or more distribution lists including each client of the host system who is a recipient of the electronic message;

storage means for storing at least one copy of the electronic message at the host system; and

notification means for using the one or more distribution lists to notify each client of the host system who is a recipient of the electronic message, such that the at least one copy of the electronic message is made available to each notified client.

40. (Original) A system as recited in claim 39 wherein the system includes means for distributing replies to an electronic message, comprising:

processor means for assigning a unique list identifier to the distribution list;

storage means for storing a single copy of a reply created in response to the electronic message; and

notification means for notifying each client who is a recipient of the reply using the unique list identifier, such that the single copy of the reply is made available to each notified client.

41. (Original) A system as recited in claim 40 wherein the system includes means for a recipient of the electronic message to optionally fork a first reply, comprising:

processor means for assigning a reply identifier to the first reply; and

processor means for using the unique identifier to associate, with the first reply, each of one or more subsequent replies created in response to the first reply.

Claims 42 – 44 (Cancelled).

45. (Currently Amended) A computer program product for implementing a method for organizing replies to an electronic message wherein the method is capable of being implemented in a messaging system that includes a host system and provides clients with electronic messaging services, the computer program product comprising:

a computer-readable medium carrying computer-executable instructions for implementing the method wherein the computer-executable instructions comprise:

program code means for assigning a unique identifier to the electronic message; and

program code means for using the unique identifier to associate one or more replies with the electronic message;

program code means for storing a single copy of the electronic message at a host system to be shared by a plurality of intended recipients; and

program code means for storing single copy of the one or more replies at the host system to be shared by the plurality of intended recipients such that the one or more replies and the associated electronic message may be accessed by each of the plurality of intended recipients.

46. (Original) A computer program product as recited in claim 45 wherein the computer-executable instructions further comprise program code means for distributing the electronic message, comprising:

program code means for creating one or more distribution lists including each client of the host system who is a recipient of the electronic message;

program code means for storing at least one copy of the electronic message at the host system; and

program code means for using the one or more distribution lists to notify each client of the host system who is a recipient of the electronic message, such that the at least one copy of the electronic message is made available to each notified client.

47. (Original) A computer program product as recited in claim 45 wherein the computer-executable instructions further comprise program code means for distributing one or more replies the electronic message, comprising:

program code means for assigning a unique list identifier to the distribution list;

program code means for storing at least one copy of a reply created in response to the electronic message; and

program code means for notifying each client who is a recipient of the reply using the unique list identifier, such that the at least one copy of the reply is made available to each client who is a recipient of the reply.